DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 164 546 TM 006 137

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TITLE The Barbee Doll Mentality and the Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test.
PUB DATE Sep 76
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association (84th, Washington, D.C., September, 1976); Best copy available

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Childrens Art; Elementary Education; *Females; Freehand Drawing; Grade 6; Intelligence Tests; Norms; *Scoring; Sex (Characteristics); Sex Differences; *Sex Stereotypes; *Test Bias; *Test Reliability
IDENTIFIERS *Goodenough Harris Drawing Test

ABSTRACT

The author suggests that the scoring criteria for the Draw-A-Woman Scale of the Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test reflect outmoded images and attitudes of the female. The woman-as-sex-object image is called the "Barbee Doll Mentality." This suggestion was tested in a sample of eleven to thirteen-year old sixth graders. The children--44 boys and 62 girls--were asked to draw a person. Ninety-five percent of the boys drew males; 5% drew females. Of the girls, 69% drew females; 26% drew males; and 4% drew equivocal pictures of humans. Using Harris' data as a basis for scoring, children who drew sexually mature females (as opposed to sexually undeveloped females) received higher scores. The present data indicated that few of the girls tested in 1975 (from 3 to 18%) emphasized stereotyped physical characteristics in the females they drew. It was also noted that equal percentages of girls drew sexually mature females as sexually mature males. It was concluded that the 1975 sample of children, as compared to those used to standardize earlier versions of the test, drew more "unisex" clothing on their persons. A one-page literature review, and item analyses are appended. (GDC)

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ED164546

Paper presented at the 84th Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C., Sept. 1976.

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THE BARBEE DOLL MENTALITY AND THE GOODENOUGH-HARRIS DRAWING TEST

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Are today's young school girls Barbee Doll types? That question repeatedly came to mind, in scoring drawings of females done by sixth graders in 1975. As I struggled with the Goodenouth-Harris Draw-A-Woman scoring criteria, I felt that a Time Machine had catapulted me back into the 1950's. It became increasingly apparent that the Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test--standardized in the 1950's, and published in 1963--was not an appropriate instrument to use in studying today's free-wheeling youngsters.

Test bias often seems to be an integral part of psychological tests. Only recently have the cold lights of scrutiny been beamed with some intensity on sex bias in tests. (See Appendix A, for a discussion of the literature.)

Granted that it is extremely difficult to construct tests which do not reflect the current cultural scene at least to some degree. Nonetheless, from the vantage-point of the rapidly shifting cultural sands of the 1970's, it is startling to see how quickly certain widely used tests become anachronisms.

An example of this time-lag is the Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test, which is relied upon to yield a rough approximation of level of intellectual functioning in preadolescent school children--though it is also used to study minority group youths, and mentally retarded subjects beyond the age of 12.

The Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test relies heavily on specific scoring instructions, which are different in the Draw-A-Man Scale and the Draw-A-Woman Scale. These scoring instructions can be found in Dale Harris' book, Children's Drawings as Measures of Intellectual Maturity, published in 1963.

Our research suggests that Dr. Harris' scoring criteria for the Draw-A-Woman Scale reflect outmoded images and attitudes regarding females. We call this phenomenon "The Barbee Doll Mentality:" the prototypical female is primarily seen as a sex object. She is endowed with prominent secondary sexual characteristics. She wears eye-catching finery, designed ostensibly for admiring males. Most importantly, she seems to be seen as essentially passive. Few of the human 'person' qualities which could--to our present way of thinking--belong to either sex seem to be in the picture.

Some historical background is called for, in order to clarify the rationale behind the Goodenough-Harris test. For a very complete discussion of the re-standardization of this test, the reader is referred

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to Dale Harris' book. The focus for discussion in the present paper will be on the evolution of the test's criteria for the drawings of females, as compared with those of males.

Florence Goodenough's successful demonstration that a study of children's drawings could yield a rough estimate of level of intellectual functioning was a real breakthrough in 1926. From her extensive studies of children's drawings, she concluded the following: that the drawing of a man was the more appropriate task for both boys and girls, since masculine clothing seemed less influenced by the vagaries of fashion. (Harris, 1963). Goodenough, studying a sample of 100 boys and 100 girls, found certain differences in drawing characteristics: (1) Boys were more likely to show some accessory, such as a pipe, cane, umbrella, house, or scenery. (2) Boys seemed to reveal greater interest in action. For example, they drew a figure walking or running more often than girls did. (3) Girls, on the other hand, more often drew such details as eyes, with one or more of these details: brow, lashes, pupil or iris. (4) Girls more frequently drew a "cupid's bow" mouth, and/or definite cheeks. (Harris, 1963)

We now turn our time-frames to the 1950's, during which period Dale Harris was working on his extensive revision and standardization of the Goodenough Scale. Dr. Harris added a Draw-A-Woman Scale, in order to widen the test's scope. He saw the Draw-A-Woman Scale as being roughly parallel to the Man Scale, with the following specific differences: (1) the ear was not used as a scoring point, since long hair often concealed that important appendage in females. Earrings, when combined with a necklace, were used as scoring points, instead. (2) Arm movement and leg movement, which was utilized on the Man Scale, were disqualified. Leg movement on the Woman Scale was bypassed possibly because of the long skirt which may be drawn. (3) Modeling or shading were used only in the drawing of the skirt. They were not relied upon as a global item, encompassing the whole drawing. Two points are given these features on the Draw-A-Man Scale. No rationale for this diminution of emphasis was given.

The developmental aspects of the drawing of a female figure were outlined: (Harris, 1963):

(1) At 5-plus years, there may be an attempt to show hair in a somewhat different way from boys' hair. (Item #20, Draw-A-Woman Scale). Girls may show eyebrows and eyelashes (Item #5, D.A.W. Scale) --and these are more commonly drawn by girls than by boys at later ages, as well.

(2) At 7-8 years: in profile drawings, a "pendant" mass of hair may be drawn. (Item #20, #21, D.A.W. Scale). Later, styling (Item #21) is seen more often in girls' than in boys' drawings.

(3) At 6 or 7 years, there may be some attempt to differentiate dress or "garb". (Item #52). For example, a triangular shaped skirt, with a belt, may be shown. Legs are often continuous with the outer line of the skirt.

(4) Later, legs are drawn closer together. The upper part of the trunk is differentiated from the skirt, "usually by lines that take a different angle from the belt or waist." There may be an "hour glass" delineation. (Item #48).

(5) Later, the sharp corners of the skirt are rounded, and there is some attempt to drape or model the skirt. (Item #50).

(6) By age 9, "cupid's bow mouth or "cosmetic lips" are seen in about 25% of the drawings, and increasingly in later ages, especially in girls. (Item #15).

(7) By age 10, use of such accessories as jewelry, purse, feminine hat may be noted. 20-25% of the drawings done after age 8 show at least one accessory. (Item #23).

(8) Secondary sex characteristics, such as drawing of the breast, (Item #67), modeling of the dress or skirt across the hips (Item #68), or drawing of the calf of the leg (Item #70) are seen after 9 or 10 years of age.

By age 12, 50% of those drawing females included the breast (Item #67) as well as the shaped calf of the leg. (Item #70) 30% include delineation of the hips.

At age 12, a styled coiffure (Item #21, 22), "cosmetic lips" (Item #15), or indication of cheeks (Item #8) appear. Many also draw a long gown or "formal". (Item #54)

Harris' developmental trends in female drawings will be compared shortly with our research sample of girls from 11 to 13 years.

With regard to the Draw-A-Man and Draw-A-Woman Scales: Harris found a .75 correlation between the two scales. He suggested that this rather low correlation might be due to the fact that the two scales "may be mixtures of several only modestly related developmental abilities." Though he stated that each scale may well be "an index to the formation of concepts which are theoretically of a similar order," he saw other uncorrelated abilities in the scale. Dr. Harris therefore recommended that both a Man and a Woman drawing be obtained from each subject. He suggested that half the sum of the two standard score I.Q. equivalents be used to obtain a more accurate estimate of ability. (Harris, 1963)

Our research study focused on sixth grade children in two public schools of a New England town which is near a large metropolitan area. Socio-economic level was estimated to be above the national norm. Since it was not possible to obtain testing permission from all parents, the sample of students cannot be considered to be random. Another limitation of the study was the following: school officials specified that the focus would be on the totality of the group, rather than on individual pupils. Therefore, such confidential information as guidance records was not available to us. The only hypotheses regarding the status of individual children were gleaned from preliminary field observations.

A team of researchers from the School of Education of Boston University conducted a 50-minute testing session. It focused on sociometric, attitudinal, and self-concept tests. At the conclusion of the testing session, the children were asked to draw a person. There was not sufficient time to obtain two human figure drawings.

Age range of the subjects was 11-0 to 13-0 years. Intellectual level of subjects encompassed children who were well above the sixth grade level in academic functioning, through to those with learning disabilities due to emotional and/or developmental problems.

Human figure drawings were obtained from 44 boys and 62 girls. 95% of the boys drew males; 5% drew females. Of the girls, 69% drew females, 26% drew what appeared to be males, and about 4% drew equivocal pictures of humans. (Equivocal drawings included two "space-persons", and the back view of a fully clothed American Indian.)

Item analysis, utilizing Harris' developmental trends as a framework, revealed the following:

	Harris' Data (1963)	1975 Research Data (ages 11-13) N=62 girls' drawings
(1)	5+years: hair different from boys' delineations	76%
	eyebrows and eyelashes	45%
(2)	7-8 years: styling	61%
(3)	6-7 years: diff. dress or "garb"	66%
(4)	later: "hour glass drawing"	24%
(5)	Skirt draped or modeled	22%
(6)	9 years: "cupid's bow" mouth (25%)	13%
(7)	10 years: feminine accessories (20-25%)	19%
(8)	Secondary sex characteristics:	
	12 years: breast (50% include)	13%
	12 years: shaped calf of leg (50% include)	03%
	12 years: hips (30% include)	11%
(9)	12 years: cheeks included	18%
(10)	12 years: long gown or "formal"	18%

Item analysis, comparing the Draw-A-Man and Draw-A-Woman Scales, is found in the Appendix. The analysis can be summarized as follows: On the physical dimension, higher scores are earned by children who drew females who were well along the sexually mature continuum. As we noted in the above analysis of the 62 girls' drawings of secondary sex characteristics ((8), above), many girls did not use this mode of expression. According to the present study, the girls were as likely to draw sexually maturing or mature males, as females:

	GIRLS (N=62)	BOYS (N=44)
Drawing of a female with secondary sex. characteristics:	13%	4%
Drawing of a male with secondary sex. characteristics. (Note: some drawings were ambiguous, and difficult to score.)	14%	57%

The Goodenough-Harris Draw-A-Woman Scale appears to assume an identification with the adolescent or adult female. The present exploratory study did not confirm this assumption.

Other noteworthy differences are as follows: children who drew males were rewarded for such artistic embellishments as "sketching" or "modeling" techniques. Those who drew females did not receive scores for carefully drawing the whole person in a similar fashion.

Freedom of movement, too, seemed to be only in the male's domain: one point could be gained for indications of free activity of both shoulders and elbows, as well as for free hip and knee movement--Activity's the name of the game!

Item analysis of the non-physical dimension reflected the changing times more markedly. We have noted that children who drew females who were bedecked in "feminine" outfits and ornaments gained points. Today, however, "unisex" outfits are favored in many circles. An especially clear example of the Time Machine wrenched back to the 1950's is this stipulation: if a house dress is drawn, it should include an apron! No corresponding references to stereotyped "masculine" sex-role outfits are given.

In summary, children of the late-latency, early adolescent period appear to be in a considerable state of flux with regard to sex-role identification. Many of today's school children do not seem impressed with "feminine" characteristics to the extent of over-emphasizing them, and they don't necessarily place a high premium on adornments.

A test like the Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test, which promotes built-in sexual stereotypes of a bygone era, does today's children an enormous disservice. Not only do such sexual stereotypes cause them confusion, but they interfere markedly with the evolution of sexual and gender identification. In addition, the attitudes of those who are entrusted with the guidance and instruction of children are not any too subtly influenced by the sex-role pigeonholing of the test.

The freely-moving, ever-evolving female of the 1970's is indeed a multifaceted person. It is imperative that such tests as the Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test be revised to reflect this important phenomenon.

APPENDIX A:

DISCUSSION OF THE LITERATURE

Bias in testing, according to Flaughter (1974), has three major sources: the content of the test, the atmosphere in which the test was administered, and the use to which the tests are put.

Since the focus of our study was on the content of the drawing test under discussion, our literature search was aimed at discovering related research studies which underscored sexual comparisons. Levinger (1966) challenged the assumption that children's human figure drawings can yield "definitive data on level of psychosexual development." She did not find that drawing the opposite sex first was an indication of psychosexual confusion. Heinrich and Triebe (1972) found that 83% of boys, and 78% of girls, in a sample of almost 5000 children ranging in age from 5 to 18, showed self-sex preferences. Marzolf and Kirchner (1972), studying the House-Tree-Person Technique, found that "the meaning of a characteristic varies with sex, and that such meaning may be associated with a personality trait in a non-linear fashion." Fellows, Service, and Xavier (1969) found that the strongest sexual identification is indicated at puberty with its greater awareness of sexual characteristics.

Though many references may be found regarding the use of the Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test, especially in an ERIC computer search since 1965, no studies were found which centered on an item analysis of the Draw-A-Man and Draw-A-Woman test, focusing on sex bias. Sex bias in human figure drawings in general does not appear to have received much attention in psychological literature of the past decade.

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Comparison of Goodenough-Harris Scales:

Item of Apparel:	Draw-A-Woman Scale:	Draw-A-Man:
23. Necklace or earrings	Scoring item	No ornamentation credited.
38. Shoe I: "feminine"	Not a thick, solid shoe.	No sex reference re shoes.
39. Shoe II: style	Shoe must be feminine & "styled".	" "
52. Garb feminine	Style: distinctly feminine apart from hair, face, or breast indication.	No parallel item.
54. Garb a definite "type"	...house dress (should include apron).	No parallel item re sex role.

Comparison of Goodenough-Harris Scales:

Scoring item:	Draw-A-Woman:	Draw-A-Man Scale:
22. Ears	No comparable scoring item.	Any indication of ears.
62. Full face	" "	Ears, an essential feature.
70. "Sketching" technique	" "	Lines: formed by well-controlled, short strokes.
71. "Modeling" technique	" "	Lines: must show creases, wrinkles, or folds.
72. Arm movement	" " (#26: definite arm activity; or arms behind back)	Must express freedom of movement: shoulders & elbows.
73. Leg movement	----	Freedom of movement: hips & knees.

A Comparison of Goodenough-Harris Scales:

Scoring item:	Draw-A-Woman Scale:	Draw-A-Man:
8. Cheeks	"Cosmetic cheeks"	No comparable scoring item.
15."Cosmetic lips"	Any clear attempt to draw a "Cupid's Bow."	" "
48. Waist I	Direction of body contour must change perceptibly, at and/or below waist.	" "
68. Directed lines & form: hip contour	Hips indicated by distinct convexity below waistline.	" "
70. Directed lines & form: calf of leg	Definite calf must be shown.	" "